

In the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 2, line 20, and ending on page 2, line 27, with the following:

- 5 -- FIGS. 1-4 6 and the following paragraphs describe some embodiments of the present invention. Like reference characters are used wherever possible to identify the components or blocks to simplify the description of the various subcomponents described herein. More particularly, the present invention is described in relation to a conventional baseball bat;
- 10 A1 however, one of ordinary skill in the art will recognize on reading this disclosure that alternative and equivalent embodiments of the present invention are possible and may be made without departing from the spirit and scope of the present invention. --

- 15 Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 3, line 23, and ending on page 4, line 14, with the following:

- 20 A2 -- FIG. 2 shows a side view of the bat 10 having a bunt aid 20 in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention attached to the barrel 16 of bat 10. As can be seen, bunt aid 20 is attached to the bat using attachment means 22, which may be a self securing strap, such as a Velcro strap. Using a Velcro self securing strap as attachment means 22 allows the bunt aid to be snug against the bat, but removable for use with other bats 10 or so bat 10 can be used conventionally. Referring to FIG. 6, attachment means 22 is shown having releasably coupled male end 22m and female end 22f, which could be snaps, buckles, or hooks and loops. Further, while attachment means 22 is shown as a Velcro self securing strap, other attachment means are usable, such as a rubber ring (such as a rubber band), a strap having snaps, etc. or even combinations, such as a rubber ring around the 30 barrel of the bat that secures the bunt aid to the bat using Velcro end pieces.

Also, attachment means 22 could be a tape or adhesive 39 between the bat 10 and the bunt aid 20. Other attachment means 22 could include a suction cup 38 on the back of bunt aid 20. Alternatively, bunt aid 20 could also be integral to the bat 10. For example, if bat 10 was made out of a polymer, the
35 bat mold could have the bunt aid attached directly to the barrel of the bat. Alternatively, a metal or wooden bat could have the bunt aid integral to the bat. Still another attachment means could be a sleeve of some type. For example, as shown in FIG. 5, bunt aid 20 could be molded to a foam sleeve 50 having at least one open end 52 that fits snuggly over the barrel 16 of bat 10,
40 where the other end could be open or closed. Or the sleeve could have a slit (not shown in the drawing) on a side opposite the bunt aid so the sleeve partially wraps around barrel 16, which slit could be anchored using Velcro hooks and loops as with the self securing straps above (also not shown in the drawing) or the like. --

45

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 4, line 26, and ending on page 5, line 6, with the following:

-- FIG. 4, shows a front view of bunt aid 20. Bunt aid 20 has an
50 opening 30, generally tapering sidewalls 40, and a seating surface 32. Seating surface 32 can have an opening 42 to expose bat 10 within the bunt aid 20. Also, ~~while no specifically shown or labeled~~, bunt aid 20 may have a lip 36 surrounding opening 30, where lip 36 is best seen in FIGS. 2 and 3. Also, while shown with a taper, sidewalls 40 do not need to be tapered. Also, while
55 shown generally circular, opening 30 could be elliptical, square, a semicircle, triangular, or any geometric shape. Similarly, opening 42 could be any geometric shape, even though it is shown somewhat elliptical to conform to the hitting surface 17 of barrel 16 of bat 10. While it is desirable to have seating surfaces 32 generally conform to the bat surface, it may be beneficial
A3
60 to have seating surface 32 define a generally flat surface to ease instruction. --